



California Standards Tests

Teacher Guide for the 2006 California Writing Standards Test in Grade Four

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For More Information

For more information about the CSTs in writing or Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, consult the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp> or contact the Standards and Assessment Division of the CDE at (916) 445-8765 (phone), at (916) 319-0969 (fax), or at STAR@cde.ca.gov (e-mail).

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Introduction

In February 2000, the Governor signed legislation to add writing assessments to the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program's California Standards Tests (CSTs) to be administered at the elementary and middle grade levels. The CSTs in writing have been administered annually since 2001 in grades four and seven as part of the California English-Language Arts Standards Tests (CSTs in English-language arts).

The CSTs in writing address state Writing Applications content standards for grades four and seven. In grade four, these standards require students to produce four types of writing: narratives, summaries, information reports, and responses to literature. In grade seven, these standards require students to produce five types of writing: narratives, persuasive essays, summaries, responses to literature, and research reports.

The CSTs in writing do not assess information reports in grade four or research reports in grade seven because these writing assignments require extended time for students to select research topics and gather information before writing can begin. In addition, the narrative writing tested in grades four and seven does not include personal or autobiographical narrative. Writing that would invite personal disclosure is not tested in any genre on the CSTs in writing.

In addition to the CSTs in writing, the 2006 CSTs in English-language arts in grades four and seven contained 75 multiple-choice questions. Beyond 2006, the CSTs in English-language arts in grades four and seven will continue to include a CST in writing. The writing test in each of these grades may address any of the writing types identified as appropriate for testing at that grade level.

This document is the latest in a series of teacher guides for the CSTs in writing in grades four and seven that have been provided each year since writing assessments were added to the STAR Program's CSTs. Every guide has featured the writing tasks administered that year, sample student responses, teacher commentaries, and scoring rubrics used to score student responses. The guides for the 2005 and 2006 CSTs in writing provide multiple sample student responses at each score point for all writing tasks administered. All of the teacher guides are available on the California Department of Education (CDE) Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>.

Writing Tasks and Scoring Rubric

The writing tasks for the 2006 CSTs in writing in grade four are shown on pages 8 through 11 and pages 32 through 34. Students in schools, tracks, or programs in session on March 7, 2006, responded to the task administered on that date or on the makeup date, March 8. Students in schools, tracks, or programs not in session on March 7 responded to the task administered on May 2 or on the makeup date, May 3. Students had time to read the tasks and to plan, write, and proofread their essays. The estimated administration time was 75 minutes, including time for directions.

Student responses to the writing tasks administered in 2006 were scored using a four-point holistic scoring rubric, with four being the highest score. Each student response was evaluated by one reader and assigned a score ranging from one to four. Ten percent of the responses were evaluated by a second reader to ensure that the scores were accurate and reliable. The score from the second reader did not count toward the student's writing test score. The score the student received from the first reader was doubled to produce the student's overall score on the writing test.

The scoring rubric for grade four is shown on pages 57 and 58. On pages 59 through 64, the grade four rubric is presented in a rearranged format to indicate how all the scoring criteria were applied to student responses in each genre tested.

In 2006, each student's result on the grade four writing task was reported as a separate Writing Applications score that could range from 2 to 8. This score was combined with the student's multiple-choice score on the CST in English-language arts to determine the student's overall English-language arts performance level. The total score possible for the CST in English-language arts was 83 points if students received the highest rating in the writing test and answered all of the multiple-choice questions correctly.

It is important to note that the score a student receives on the CST in writing does not equate to a performance level. A student can be said to have achieved at a particular performance level only when that student's performance-level result is based on results of the full CST in English-language arts (including the CST in writing).

Sample Student Responses and Teacher Commentaries

Sample student responses to the writing tasks administered in grade four on March 7 and 8 are shown on pages 12 through 31, along with teacher commentaries. Sample student responses to the tasks administered on May 2 and 3 are shown on pages 35 through 56, along with teacher commentaries. This guide contains three sample student responses at the mid-range of each score point for the two writing tasks administered in grade four

in March and May 2006. Three responses for each score point are provided to illustrate the different types of responses that may receive the same score. Accompanying these student responses are teacher commentaries that illustrate how criteria for each score point were applied during the scoring process.

The sample responses are drawn from field tests and operational tests. Although there are three student responses for each score point, it should be remembered that the range of student work within any of the four score points is broader than even multiple examples can suggest. Furthermore, responses demonstrate differing combinations of strengths and weaknesses within a given score point.

In 2006, response to literature was tested in grade four. It should be noted, however, that the type of writing students may be asked to produce can change annually since other genres may be tested in this grade.

Suggested Uses for This Teacher Guide

The writing tasks, sample student responses, and teacher commentaries in this guide are intended to illustrate how the scoring rubric was used to score student responses on the 2006 CST in writing in grade four. Teachers also can use the information provided as guidance in applying the rubric to their students' writing. Students can familiarize themselves with state content standards addressed on the writing test by using the rubric to score other students' writing. These suggested activities can enable teachers and students to use rubric-based scoring as a diagnostic tool to help identify areas of strength and weakness in student writing.

The list below provides further suggestions for using the teacher guide to inform and improve the assessment and teaching of student writing.

Using the Teacher Guide for School District or School Assessments

Some suggestions for using the teacher guide to help improve school district or school assessments include but are not limited to the following activities:

- Use the contents of the guide to become familiar with the key components of writing assessments (i.e., writing task, scoring rubric, student responses).
- Examine the released writing tasks to identify distinguishing elements of response to literature writing.
- Examine the scoring rubric to ascertain critical features of a holistic rubric.

- Analyze sample student responses in conjunction with teacher commentaries and criteria in the scoring rubrics to determine grade-level-specific writing expectations. This information can inform decisions about areas of focus for writing programs.
- Compare the state writing tasks and scoring rubrics with those that accompany the school's existing curricular program. This information can help identify areas that may need to be strengthened in writing programs. It could be determined, for example, that a particular writing program may not provide students enough opportunities to write in a particular genre. It also could be determined that the characteristics of a writing genre in a particular curricular program do not align well with the characteristics of that genre as defined by the state content standards and the CST in writing.

Using the Teacher Guide for Classroom Assessments

Some suggestions for using the teacher guide to help improve classroom assessments include but are not limited to the following activities:

- Use the writing tasks, sample student responses, teacher commentaries, and scoring rubrics to help teachers understand what is required by specific state content standards that are the focus of the writing tests.
- Use the writing tasks and scoring rubrics to help teachers understand the advantages and benefits of writing tests:
 - The tasks and rubrics engage students in cognitively complex activities, and
 - They give students an opportunity to create rather than select a response.
- Encourage teachers to study the scoring rubrics to understand the criteria that should be used to assess writing.
- Use the writing tasks, sample student responses, teacher commentaries, and scoring rubrics to help teachers identify the knowledge and skills required by the writing tests. This information should become the focus of writing instruction.
- Encourage teachers to use the writing tasks, sample student responses, teacher commentaries, and scoring rubrics to help their students understand what is expected of them on the CST in writing.

Questions and Answers About the Grade Four and Grade Seven CSTs in Writing for 2006

In 2004, the California Department of Education (CDE), the State Board of Education (SBE), and Educational Testing Service (ETS)* convened a statewide Writing Test Task Force in Sacramento to review the current status of the California Writing Standards Tests (CSTs in writing) and recommend possible changes. The task force consisted of teachers (kindergarten through grade twelve), administrators, test measurement specialists, university professors, and other educators. The following are answers to commonly asked questions about the recommendations of the task force and the relationship of those recommendations to the 2006 administration of the CST in writing:

What did the Writing Test Task Force recommend?

The task force made a number of recommendations, including field testing new writing tasks, modifying the scoring process, reviewing the scoring rubric, modifying the writing test format, and clarifying directions to students. The full text of the task force recommendations is available in Item #4 of the SBE January 2005 Meeting Agenda. The agenda can be accessed on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/be/ag/ag/yr05/agenda0105.asp>.

How were the new writing tasks developed?

The following process was used for developing the new writing tasks:

- The writing tasks initially were developed by item writers at item-writing workshops and by ETS content experts.

- Proposed writing tasks were reviewed by ETS content experts, CDE content experts, and the English-Language Arts Assessment Review Panel. Reviewers approved 20 writing tasks for field testing in grade four and 20 writing tasks for field testing in grade seven.
- ETS pilot tested a number of writing tasks to determine which of the modifications in format and directions recommended by the Writing Test Task Force were most helpful to students.
- The new writing tasks with modified formats and directions were field tested in 2005 with thousands of California students.
- Following reviews of field test results by CDE, ETS, and the English-Language Arts Assessment Review Panel, two grade-four and two grade-seven writing tasks were selected for the spring 2006 administration.

Are the writing genres that were eligible for testing in previous years still eligible for administrations of the CSTs in writing?

Yes. All the writing genres eligible for testing in grades four and seven in previous years were eligible for the 2006 administration of the CSTs in writing and will continue to be eligible for future administrations.

* ETS is the testing contractor for the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) Program, which includes the CSTs in writing.

How were the writing tasks administered in 2006 different from those administered in previous years?

Since the writing genres eligible for testing are the same as in previous years, the new writing tasks administered in 2006 were very similar to those administered previously. The following changes were the most notable:

- A planning page was added to allow students to plan their responses.
- The directions to students were refined to make them clearer.

Students will have fewer pages on which to write their responses to summary writing tasks when this genre is assigned in future years. This change will indicate to students that summaries are not expected to be as long as the passages they summarize.

Was writing on the planning page scored?

Writing on the planning page was not scored. Students were free to use this page or not use it as they wished.

What if students spent so much time planning their essays that they did not finish their responses?

The directions on the planning page told students to spend no more than 15 minutes planning their responses. In addition, after students had 15 minutes for planning, the test administrator was to announce that students should finish any work on the planning page and begin their essays.

If students wrote their essays on the planning page of the test booklet, were their essays scored?

No. A brief introduction to the planning page stated that writing on that page was not to be scored. As in previous years, the directions in the test booklet

stated that only writing on the lined pages of the test booklet would be scored.

Was the process for scoring the 2006 writing test the same as in previous years?

No. In the past, the two readers who read each student response gave the response an identical score approximately 75 percent of the time. The responses received either identical or adjacent scores from the two readers over 99 percent of the time. Ninety-nine percent identical or adjacent scores constitutes such high percentage of interrater agreement that it essentially amounts to a score produced by a single scorer. To expedite scoring and reduce scoring costs, therefore, each student response from the 2006 administration was read by only one scorer without sacrificing scoring reliability. The SBE had approved this recommendation at the January 2005 meeting.

In 2006, one reader evaluated each student response and assigned a score ranging from one to four. Ten percent of the responses were read by a second reader to ensure that the scores were accurate and reliable. The score from the second reader did not count toward the student's writing test score. The score the student received from the one reader was doubled to produce the student's overall score on the writing test.

If one reader's score was doubled, did students receive only scores of 2, 4, 6, or 8 on the writing test?

That is correct. In previous years, if the two readers' scores were identical or only one point apart, the two scores were added together to produce the student's writing test score. In 2006, only one reader read each student response and gave it a score of 1, 2, 3, or 4. This score was doubled to produce the student's overall score of 2, 4, 6, or 8.

Did the writing tests receive a performance-level result in 2006?

No. As in past years, a student's score on the writing test was added to the student's multiple-choice score on the grade four or grade seven CST in English-language arts. This combined score was then placed on a scale, and the scale score was assigned a performance level for the CST in English-language arts.

Did California teachers score the 2006 writing tests?

The readers were college graduates who possessed at least a bachelor's degree. Whenever possible, educators were hired as readers. California teachers selected the sample student responses used to train the readers.

Were the scoring rubrics changed?

The English-Language Arts Assessment Review Panel reviewed the scoring rubric for grade four and made slight adjustments to ensure that it was making accurate distinctions among score points. This updated rubric was used to score the 2006 CST in writing. The scoring rubrics for 2006 are on pages 57–58.

Where can I find additional information on the writing test scoring process?

Additional information is available on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/scoring-process.asp>.

Where can I find additional information on the writing test to inform instruction?

Several teacher guides to the CSTs in writing are available on the CDE Web site at <http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/sr/resources.asp>. These guides contain background information on the writing test, the writing tasks administered in the previous operational administration, the scoring rubric used to score the tests, student responses that illustrate student writing at each score point, and teacher commentaries explaining why the student responses received the scores they did.

Grade Four Response to Literature Writing Task

Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

The writing task below was administered to students who took the CST in writing in grade four on March 7 or 8, 2006. Sample student responses and teacher commentaries for this task are shown on pages 12 through 31. The writing task used for the May 2 and 3 administration is shown on pages 32 through 34.

Response to Literature Writing Task

Directions:

- Read the story on the following pages.
- As you read, you may mark the story or make notes. Marks and notes will not be scored.
- After reading the story, you will be given directions to write an essay. You will have time to read, plan your essay, and write a first draft with edits.
- You may reread or go back to the story at any time during the test.
- Only what you write on the lined pages in this booklet will be scored.
- Use only a No. 2 pencil to write your essay.

Scoring:

Your writing will be scored on how well you

- show your understanding of the story,
- give examples from the story, and
- use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Little by Little, Piece by Piece *by Marilyn Helmer*

Once there was a farmer who had three sons. Every year after they harvested their crops and stored their winter supply, the farmer sold what was left and divided the money equally among himself and his sons.

As he gave each boy his share, the father always said, "Remember, my sons: little by little, piece by piece."

Oldest Brother and Middle Brother paid no attention to their father's words. They cared only for the luxuries that their share of the money would buy.

Youngest Brother, however, listened to his father. He saw how each year his father used his share of the money to buy more land. And he noticed that each

year there was more money to be divided among them all.

Time passed, and the father grew old and died. He left the land to be divided equally among his three sons.

"I will sell my share," said Oldest Brother. "I'm going to the Great City to seek my fortune."

"I will sell my share, too, and come with you," said Middle Brother.

"Wait," Youngest Brother pleaded. "Our wealth is here in the land. If we work together and buy more land, little by little, piece by piece, our fortune will grow."

"You sound like our father," sneered Oldest Brother. "I'm tired of making my fortune little by little."

"Piece by piece is not for me," Middle Brother agreed. "I want my fortune right now."

So Oldest Brother and Middle Brother sold their shares, leaving Youngest Brother with only one small piece of land. They headed for the Great City, promising to return for a visit at the end of the year.

Youngest Brother worked the land as he always had. "Little by little, piece by piece," he would say with satisfaction as he watched the seedlings push their way up through the rich soil. When the crops were harvested, Youngest Brother used the extra money from the sale of his crops to buy back some of the land his brothers had sold.

Meanwhile the two oldest brothers had reached the Great City. There they found all the luxuries they had dreamed of.

Little by little was not for Oldest Brother or Middle Brother. They spent their money quickly and freely. Piece by piece, it tumbled through their fingers like pebbles in a landslide.

At the end of the year, the brothers dressed in their finest clothes and went to visit Youngest Brother. They came on horseback, laden with gifts, and told Youngest Brother tale after tale of their wonderful life in the Great City.

"Now tell us your news," said Oldest Brother when he paused to catch his breath.

"Yes," said Middle Brother. "What interesting things have you been doing?"

"I had a good harvest this year," said Youngest Brother. "I even managed to buy back some of the land you sold."

Oldest Brother and Middle Brother exchanged smiles. At the end of the visit, they hurried back to their fine life in the Great City.

Another year passed. Oldest Brother and Middle Brother again came to visit Youngest Brother. This time they arrived on foot and brought only a few simple gifts.

"Little by little, life in the Great City is becoming more expensive," Oldest Brother explained.

"Piece by piece, our things are wearing out," said Middle Brother.

The older brothers noticed that Youngest Brother had even more land than he'd had the year before. They were surprised to see that he had built a new wing onto the house and hired two farm hands and a cook. Youngest Brother prepared a feast in their honor.

"This is a fine feast indeed," said Middle Brother.

"Finer than the year before," said Oldest Brother.

"I had a good year," Youngest Brother replied again.

When they came for their visit the third year, the older brothers arrived with only the clothes on their backs.

"Little by little, life in the Great City is becoming ever more expensive," said Middle Brother.

"Piece by piece, we have had to sell our jewels, baubles, and trinkets just to live," said Oldest Brother. They noticed that Youngest Brother's farm was now almost as large as it had been when their father was alive. The table groaned under the feast he had prepared for them.

"You seem to prosper," said Middle Brother.

"I have had a good year," Youngest Brother replied modestly.

The next year Youngest Brother waited and watched for his brothers, but they did not come. Finally Youngest Brother set out for the Great City to look for them. He found them living in a shack at the edge of the city.

Oldest Brother looked away in shame. "We could not afford to make a trip home this year," he said. "Little by little, our fortune has disappeared."

"Piece by piece, we have lost everything," Middle Brother added.

"Come back to the farm with me," said Youngest Brother.

So Oldest Brother and Middle Brother returned to the farm where they had grown up. Youngest Brother hired them to work for him.

At the end of the year, Middle Brother and Oldest Brother used their wages to buy shares in the farm. From then on, each year as their father before them had done, the three brothers bought more land. Little by Little, their farm grew until it stretched as far as the eye could see. And piece by piece, the fortune of the three brothers grew with it.

"Little by Little, Piece by Piece" by Marilyn Helmer. from *CRICKET*, August 2002, Vol. 29, No. 12. Copyright © 2002 by Marilyn Helmer. Used by permission of *CRICKET* Magazine.

**Response to Literature
Writing the Essay**

What is the lesson the author feels her readers should learn? Use details from the story to support your answer.

When you write your essay, remember

- to show your understanding of the story,
- to give examples from the story, and
- to use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Response to Literature Task—Grade Four

Student responses to the response to literature task on pages 8 through 11 and 32 through 34 were scored using the Grade Four Scoring Rubric shown on pages 57 and 58. This rubric incorporates portions of the English-language arts content standards for Writing Strategies and Written Conventions that address writing in general and include criteria specific to response to literature writing.

Standard

2.2 Write responses to literature:

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of the literary work.
- b. Support judgments through references to both the text and prior knowledge.

Grade Four Focus

For the writing tasks in grade four, students were expected to read a short story and write a response that supports judgments about it, using evidence from the text and prior knowledge. Students who did well included a clearly presented central idea, supported it with specific references to the text, and maintained consistent control of organization and focus. Effective responses exhibited a clear understanding of the literary work.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 4 Essay

Student Work Sample One

Little by Little, Piece by Piece by Marilyn Helmer, has some important lessons in it. Youngest Brother becomes very successful by being patient and spending money wisely, taking everything little by little, planning ahead, and by listening to his father's advice.

Being patient and spending your money wisely are two keys to success. It took Youngest Brother more than 4 years to get all of his father's land back! You have to slowly work your way up. Success and wealth doesn't just come to you, work for it. Once you have everything that you want, spend it wisely. Oldest Brother and Middle Brother spent it too quickly, and by the end, they were poor.

Planning ahead is a skill that Oldest Brother and Middle Brother lacked. The Great City seemed to be doing very well at the time, and it would have been wise to save money for when the prices shot up. They shouldn't have spent all of their fortune on fancy clothes and gifts. In just 3 years, the pair was poor and unhappy. Youngest Brother spent his money on more important things such as food.

Taking everything little by little is one of the many attributes of Youngest Brother. He didn't buy all of his land at once, otherwise he wouldn't have any money left. He bought small pieces of land one at a time. Meanwhile, in the Great City, his brothers spent everything that they had and had none left by the end.

The last lesson that I learned is to listen to your elders, they know best. Your parents or grandparents have more experience than you. They would have tested out new techniques and chosen the best ones to show to you. Your parents care about you and will show you many ways to live successfully. Youngest Brother listened to his father and lived a happy life.

Commentary

This response demonstrates a clear understanding of the story and the purpose of a response to literature by effectively supporting judgments with specific references to the text. The writer clearly addresses all of the writing task by identifying lessons the author feels readers should learn and thoroughly supporting them with details and specific examples from the story.

The writer maintains a consistent organizational structure and focus by introducing five lessons in the first paragraph, supporting them with textual evidence in the next four paragraphs, and presenting final thoughts in a concluding paragraph.

The central idea is clearly stated in the first paragraph ("Youngest brother becomes very successful by being patient and spending money wisely, taking everything little by little, planning ahead, and by listening to [your] father's advice."). The writer supports this idea in subsequent paragraphs with relevant facts and details from the text. In the second paragraph, for example, the writer identifies two lessons ("being patient" and "spending your money wisely") and explains how the text illustrates them ("It took Youngest Brother more than 4 years to get all of his father's land back!" and "Oldest Brother and Middle Brother spent it too quickly, and by the end, they were poor.").

In the third paragraph, the writer notes that Oldest Brother and Middle Brother failed to heed the lesson of planning ahead by quickly spending their fortunes in the Great City. In the fourth paragraph, the writer contrasts Youngest Brother's actions ("He didn't buy all of his land at once, otherwise he wouldn't have any money left.") with those of the older brothers ("... [they] spent everything that they had and had none left by the end.") to illustrate the value of "taking everything little by little."

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 4 Essay

Student Work Sample One (continued)

Little by Little, Piece by Piece is a very educational story that provided me with lessons that will change my life for the better. I recommend this book to others because it taught me very important lessons and will hopefully teach you the values and lessons of life.

Commentary

The writer uses a variety of sentence types, including simple sentences ("You have to slowly work your way up."), compound sentences ("The Great City seemed to be doing very well at the time, and it would have been wise to save money for when the prices shot up."), and complex sentences ("Once you have everything that you want, spend it wisely." "In just 3 years, the pair was poor and unhappy."). The writer sometimes mixes sentence lengths effectively as well ("He bought small pieces of land one at a time. Meanwhile, in the Great City, his brothers spent everything that they had and had none left by the end.").

This response contains few errors in the conventions of the English language. The first three paragraphs contain spelling errors ("sucess," "to" for "too," and "planing"), and the writer underlines the name of the story in the first and last paragraphs instead of putting it in quotes. Occasionally, the writer fails to use semicolons ("The last lesson that I learned is to listen to your elders, they know best."). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 4 Essay

Student Work Sample Two

At the beginning of the story the father said, "Remember my sons little by little piece by piece." But Older brother and Middle brother did not listen. What the author means is that you shouldn't try to earn everything at once. After the father said this, he died and left the land to his three sons. Middle brother and Older brother wanted to go to the Great City, but young brother was wise and said "our wealth is here in the land." But they went to the Great city anyway.

The author wants the reader to learn that you shouldn't spend all your money at once, and you should save it. Little by little, Middle and Older brothers spent their money in the Great City. Later that year, they came back from the city to see Younger brother. Younger brother told them that it had been good this year and managed to buy back some of the land they sold. After the visit, Older and Middle brothers still went back to the city where they kept spending all their money.

The author also wants the reader to know that if you stick with something it will help you succeed. Another year passed and they came back from the Great City again, but this time, they arrived on foot and had very little gifts. "Little by little, the Great City is getting more expensive," said older brother. Younger brother explained how he had a good year and brought some more land back. The third year Middle brother and Older brother returned with only the clothes on their body. Again they explained how the city had become more expensive.

The author is trying to show how you should use your money wisely. This time, the brothers did not return to the city. Instead Younger brother gave them jobs on the farm. After working for awhile, Middle and Older brothers had enough money to buy their land back. This story proves the author's opinion that if you work hard at something good things will happen to you.

Commentary

This response demonstrates a clear understanding of the story and the purpose of a response to literature by making judgments about the story and supporting them with specific textual references. The writer clearly addresses all of the writing task by identifying lessons the author feels readers should learn and effectively supporting them with specific examples.

The writer maintains a consistent organizational structure and focus by identifying several lessons ("... you shouldn't spend all your money at once, and you should save it," "... if you stick with something it will help you succeed," "... you should use your money wisely," and "... if you work hard at something good things will happen to you.") and then discussing the lessons paragraph by paragraph.

The central idea is clearly stated in the first paragraph ("... you shouldn't try to earn everything at once."). This idea is developed as the writer explains the lessons the story illustrates. To illustrate one of the lessons, the writer compares Middle and Oldest Brothers' decision to sell their shares of the land immediately and go to the Great City with Youngest Brother's decision to stay on the farm ("Little by little, Middle and Older brothers spent their money in the Great City." "... [Younger Brother] managed to buy back some of the land they sold."). The writer contrasts Middle and Oldest Brothers' careless spending with Youngest brother's careful spending to illustrate the foolishness of spending all one's money at once.

In the third paragraph, the writer supports the lesson that one should "stick with something" in order to succeed by contrasting the increasing poverty of Middle and Oldest Brother with the growing wealth of Youngest Brother who buys land back each year.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 4 Essay

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Commentary

In the last paragraph, the writer illustrates the lesson that one should use his or her money wisely by showing what happens to the two older brothers after they return ("After working for awhile, Middle and Older brothers had enough money to buy their land back.").

The response demonstrates sentence variety, including simple sentences ("The author is trying to show how you should use your money wisely."), compound sentences ("Middle brother and Older brother wanted to go to the Great City, but young brother was wise and said 'our wealth is here in the land.'"), complex sentences ("After the father said this, he died and left the land to his three sons."), and compound-complex sentences ("Another year passed, and they came back from the Great City again, but this time, they arrived on foot and had very little gifts."). The response sometimes demonstrates a mixture of sentence lengths as well, as illustrated by the last three sentences of the first paragraph.

This response contains very few errors in the conventions of the English language. The writer, for example, mistakenly capitalizes only one part of the character's names (Older brother, Middle brother, and Younger brother). In the first paragraph, the comma is mistakenly omitted before direct dialogue ("... but young brother was wise and said 'our wealth is here in the land.'"). In the final sentence, the writer does not include a comma to separate the subordinate clause from the rest of the sentence ("... if you work hard at something good things will happen to you."). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 4 Essay

Student Work Sample Three

"Little by Little, Piece by Piece"

In this story, there lived an old farmer and his three sons who learned something very important about life. Each year, the farmer sold his left over crops and divided his money equally between himself and his sons. The farmer would say to his sons, "little by little, piece by piece," until the day he died.

The oldest two sons sold their share of the land that the father had left behind, and they headed for the Great City. The youngest son kept the family business going, little by little, piece by piece. Every year the youngest son bought more land with his money, as the older sons bought more expensive items with their money. Each and every year, the older brothers went to visit their brother, and year after year, they saw that their younger brother was earning more money. Their money was fading away.

One year, the oldest brothers couldn't afford to visit their brother anymore, so the youngest brother went to visit them. When he arrived, he saw that his brothers were living in a shack, so he decided to let them come back with him; they did. The eldest brothers began to work on their farm and bought more land with their money, little by little, piece by piece.

All three brothers learned something important in "Little by Little, Piece by Piece." The two eldest brothers learned to have patience, and, later on, wait for what they wanted to come, little by little, piece by piece. They also learned to be wise with what they had, not to just waste it all away, to use it piece by piece and little by little. Listening to your family members is something extremely important that was learned in this story. Not listening to their father is one of the reasons why they ended up with no money while in the Great City.

Commentary

This response demonstrates a clear understanding of the story and the purpose of a response to literature by making judgments about the story and supporting them with evidence from the text. The writer clearly addresses the writing task by relating events in the story to the lessons readers should learn.

The writer maintains a consistent organizational structure and focus by retelling the story in the second and third paragraphs and explaining the lessons events illustrate in the fourth paragraph.

In general, the writer's retelling illustrates that the youngest brother prospers by taking "little by little, piece by piece" to heart, while the other brothers fail until they follow this advice as well. In the fourth paragraph, the writer explains the lessons the story demonstrates ("The two eldest brothers learned to have patience, and, later on, wait for what they wanted to come . . .," "... to be wise with what they had, not to just waste it all away," and to listen "to your family members.").

The response demonstrates good sentence variety, including simple sentences ("Their money was fading away."), compound sentences ("The oldest two sons sold their share of the land that the father had left behind, and they headed for the Great City."), complex sentences ("Even though the two oldest brothers were very foolish and uncaring with their money, the youngest brother was very caring and gave his older brother a big hand."), and compound-complex sentences ("Each and every year, the oldest brother went to visit their brother, and year after year, they saw that their younger brother was earning more money."). The writer also effectively weaves sentences of various structures and lengths into graceful paragraphs. The second paragraph illustrates this skill especially well.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 4 Essay

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

At the end of the story, the older brothers ended up picking themselves off the ground and starting all over again. Even though the two oldest brothers were very foolish and uncaring with their money, the youngest brother was very caring and gave his older brother a big hand. In "Little by Little, Piece by Piece" three characters were taught very important things, but many other people can be taught something from this story too.

Commentary

With the exception of a spelling error at the end of the first paragraph ("until") and occasional errors in use of commas ("The two eldest brothers learned to have patience, and, later on, wait for what they wanted to come, little by little, piece by piece." In "Little by Little, Piece by Piece" three characters were taught very important things..."), the response contains very few errors in the conventions of the English language. These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 3 Essay

Student Work Sample One

This story is called Little by Little, Piece by Piece and is about a father and his three sons. The father told them to take care of the farm little by little, piece by piece. He gave them money after every year. After the years, his father died. Their father left them to take care of the land. The oldest brother and middle brother became greedy and sold their part of the land to move to the city.

They moved to the city, but the youngest brother stayed and made money slowly. The oldest brother and middle brother spent all their money at once. They had many things and visited Youngest brother every year. They brought lots of gifts, but little by little, their fortune disappeared.

Youngest brother started buying land, farm hands, and a cook. The oldest brother and middle brother started losing their money because everything became more expensive. Youngest brother hired them at the end. The author wants to tell the reader that you should save your money and take your time insted of using your money all at once.

Commentary

This writer demonstrates an understanding of the story and a general understanding of the purpose of a response to literature by retelling events in the story and explaining the lesson the events illustrate. The writer addresses the writing task by using the retelling as textual evidence in support of the writer's interpretation.

The writer maintains a consistent focus and organizational structure. All of the response except the first and last sentences consists of a summary of events narrated at a general level. This narrative illustrates the lesson and the essay's central idea ("... you should save your money and take your time instead of using your money all at once."). This idea is presented in the essay's final sentence as a conclusion that follows from the writer's narrative.

The response consists largely of simple and often short sentences with a subject-predicate structure ("Their father left them to take care of the land." "Youngest brother hired them at the end."). This repetitiveness produces occasional chopiness. Sometimes, however, the response demonstrates more varied sentence structures. These structures include complex sentences ("After the years, his father died.") and compound sentences ("They moved to the city, but the youngest brother stayed and made money slowly.").

This response contains some errors in the conventions of the English language. In the first paragraph, for example, the writer presents the title of the story without quotes and inappropriately shifts pronouns from singular to plural ("After the years, his father died. Their father left them to take care of the land.") The last paragraph contains a misspelling ("insted"). These errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 3 Essay

Student Work Sample Two

The lesson that the author is trying to tell us is that when you receive a lot of money, you should use it wisely, and spend some on only important stuff. Youngest brother saved his money and only spent his money to buy land. It was very smart how youngest brother was really thinking about this when he was gonna use his money.

Another part of the author's lessons is that you shouldn't be greedy. I know what the author's messages are because in the story it described how middle and oldest brother were being greedy, and youngest brother was wise. Middle and oldest brother sold their land to buy luxuries in the city, but youngest brother sold his crops and bought land. The story is a lot like other stories because they usually have a greedy rich person and a rich one, and there is a wise guy who warns the greedy one and the greedy one turns into a poor man. This is a lot like this story.

Older and middle brother were saying: "Oh, the city gets more and more expensive each year!" because they were trying to hide the fact that they were getting poorer and poorer each time they went to visit younger brother. But since youngest brother listened to his father, he got richer and richer by selling crops every year.

So I guess basically the moral is: "Money can by happiness, but greed won't get you anywhere near happiness. But money will only buy you happiness if you're wise, good hearted, and compassionate. To be rich and happy you need to 1. Be good hearted 2. Be compassionate and understanding 3. Be fair with everyone 4. Be wise when it comes to profits or spending money 5. "Listen!!!" to other people's warning. Those 5 things will make you a rich good person.

Commentary

This writer demonstrates an understanding of the story and the purpose of a response to literature by making judgments about the text and providing some support for them with mostly relevant examples. The writer organizes the response by discussing a lesson from the story in each paragraph and drawing conclusions about the story's lessons in the final paragraph.

The writer begins by identifying a lesson in the first paragraph ("... when you receive a lot of money, you should use it wisely, and spend some on only important stuff.") and supports this interpretation with a brief reference to the text ("Youngest brother saved his money and only spent his money to buy land.").

In the second paragraph, the writer identifies a second lesson ("... you shouldn't be greedy."). The writer makes a claim about the middle and oldest brother ("[they] were being greedy, and youngest brother was wise.") and supports it with evidence from the text ("[They] sold their land to buy luxuries in the city, but youngest brother sold his crops and bought land."). The writer then draws on prior experience to compare "Little by Little, Piece by Piece" with "other stories," but it is not clear how the comparison illustrates a lesson and it tends to disrupt the organizational structure.

In the third paragraph the writer implies that people should listen to their parents ("... youngest brother listened to his father, he got richer and richer by selling crops every year."). Here the writer may be implying that the older brothers got poorer because, unlike Youngest Brother, they did not listen to their father. The writer's point would be clearer, however, if the contrast had been made more explicit.

The final paragraph presents lessons that go beyond those the writer identifies in earlier paragraphs. Three

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 3 Essay

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Commentary

of these lessons (“... greed won’t get you anywhere near happiness.” “Be wise when it comes to profits and spending money.” “Listen!!!” to other people’s warning.”) are based on and follow from the writer’s earlier discussion. The lessons on good heartedness, compassion and understanding, and fairness, however, are less effective because they are not supported by the writer’s previous discussion.

The response demonstrates a variety of sentence types, including simple sentences (“This is a lot like this story.”), compound sentences (“Money can by happiness, but greed won’t get you anywhere near happiness.”), and complex sentences (“The lesson that the author is trying to tell us is that when you receive a lot of money, you should use it wisely, and spend some on only important stuff.”).

This response contains some errors in the conventions of the English language, including errors in usage (“by” for “buy”), misuse of a comma (“... you should use it wisely, and spend some on only important stuff.”), and misuse of a colon before a direct quote in the second paragraph (“Older and middle brother were just saying: ‘Oh, the city gets more and more expensive each year!’”). These errors do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 3 Essay

Student Work Sample Three

I think the lesson the author wants us to learn is that little by little, piece by piece you will get more if you do it slowly like how Youngest Brother did. Youngest Brother eventually had the most money because he was wise and didn't want a fortune just then and there because he knew that in the future, he'd finally have no money and be a begger if he didn't have a job. But Oldest Brother and Middle Brother really wanted to be rich and they didn't realize that if all three brothers worked together they could buy a bunch of acres of land and could buy many fine clothes.

Another way to see this lesson is that if you start out with one chicken then the chicken will have chicks and you'll be plentiful with chicken. Since chickens can lay eggs, you can make a fortune by selling eggs. That is what Youngest Brother did with crops. He sold crops to people for a living, and he did it slowly. This way he'd have enough money to buy land. But if you were to be like Oldest and Middle Brother, you'd surely become a homeless person in a few years or months or days. Don't expect to have a home like Oldest and Middle Brother, they only had a home because Youngest Brother was kind enough to let them live with him.

Commentary

This response demonstrates an understanding of both the story and the purpose of a response to literature by identifying the central idea of the story and supporting this judgment with textual evidence.

The writer maintains a mostly consistent organizational structure and focus. The response begins with a judgment about the author's lesson ("... little by little, piece by piece you will get more if you do it slowly like how Youngest Brother did."), which also serves as the writer's central idea. The writer supports this idea by contrasting Younger Brother ("Youngest Brother eventually had the most money because he was wise and didn't want a fortune just then and there") with the Middle and Older brothers ("Oldest Brother and Middle Brother really wanted to be rich and they didn't realize that if all three brothers worked together they could buy a bunch of acres of land and could buy many fine clothes.").

In the second paragraph, the writer uses the analogy between selling eggs and selling crops to explain how Youngest Brother got rich slowly ("He sold crops to people..." "This way he'd have enough money to buy land."). The writer again contrasts Youngest Brother with his brothers, whose desire for quick riches would make them "homeless."

This response demonstrates a variety of sentence types, including simple sentences ("That is what Youngest Brother did with crops."), compound sentences ("He sold crops to people for a living, and he did it slowly."), and complex sentences ("Since chickens can lay eggs, you can make a fortune by selling eggs."). In the second paragraph, the writer provides a smooth flow of ideas by mixing sentences of varied lengths and structures.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 3 Essay

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

Commentary

This response contains a few errors in the conventions of the English language, including a spelling error in the first paragraph (“begger”), a missing comma before the coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence in the first paragraph (“But Oldest Brother and Middle Brother really wanted to be rich and they didn’t realize that if all three brothers worked together they could buy a bunch of acres of land and could buy many fine clothes.”), and a missing comma in the second paragraph to separate a subordinate clause from the rest of the sentence (“Another way to see this lesson is that if you start out with one chicken then the chicken will have chicks and you’ll be plentiful with chicken.”). These errors do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 2 Essay

Student Work Sample One

This story is about three boys who lived on a farm with their father. The youngest listened to their father. The other two did not. When the father died, the middle and oldest brothers moved to the Great City. The youngest one stayed home with the land. A year later the Brothers visited the youngest with their finest clothes on. They told tale after tale about their wonderful lives.

The next time they visited, they only had a few gifts and ragged clothes. They were surprised that the youngest had even more land. He also had a cook and a maid. They had a fiest that night. Then, a year later the youngest waited for the two brothers, but they did not come so he road to the golden city. He found them in a shack. So now you see the youngest was smart and listened to the father, but the other two didn't, therefore the youngest lived happily ever after.

Commentary

This response demonstrates little understanding of a response to literature and the story. Most of the response is a retelling of events followed by only one very general statement that suggests a lesson and the central idea ("... the youngest was smart and listened to the father, but the other two didn't, therefore the youngest lived happily ever after.").

The events paraphrased in the response provide only weak support for the writer's judgments. The writer notes, for example, that Youngest Brother heeded his father's advice ("The youngest listened to their father. The other two did not.") but never specifies what the father told his sons or in what way the youngest son followed the father's advice. Similarly, the writer suggests that the older brothers went from riches to rags ("... [they] visited the youngest with their finest clothes on" and later visited with "ragged clothes.") but never makes it clear that this change in dress results from careless spending.

This response contains some variety in sentence types, including simple sentences ("The youngest one stayed home with the land." "They told tale after tale about their wonderful lives."), complex sentences in the first paragraph ("When the father died, the middle and oldest brothers moved to the Great City."), and compound-complex sentences ("Then, a year later the youngest waited for the two brothers, but they did not come so he road to the golden city."). Although the writer mixes simple and complex sentences effectively in spots, most sentences tend to be short and choppy ("They were surprised that the youngest had even more land. He also had a cook and a maid. They had a fiest that night.").

The response contains errors in the conventions of the English language, including errors in spelling ("fiest" for "feast"), an error in capitalization ("A year

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 2 Essay

Student Work Sample One (continued)

Commentary

later the Brothers visited the youngest with their finest clothes on."), and a comma splice ("So now you see the youngest was smart and listened to the father, but the other two didn't, therefore the youngest lived happily ever after."). These errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 2 Essay

Student Work Sample Two

I think the author wanted the readers to learn that you have to use your money little by little or you will lose all of it just like the two big brothers did. If you use your money little by little you won't have to worry about buying things because your using your money little by little, and your still making money. I think the author is also trying to teach us to listen to your parents or else you will miss out on important things.

Commentary

In this response, a lack of support for the writer's claims about the story's lessons indicates that the writer has little understanding of the purpose of a response to literature.

The organizational structure of this three-sentence response consists of a list of lessons from the text ("... you have to use your money little by little ...", "If you use your money little by little, you won't have to worry about buying things ...", "... listen to your parents."). Very limited details provide weak support for one of the lessons ("... you have to use your money little by little or you will lose all of it just like the two big brothers did.").

Although the writer uses compound sentences ("I think the author is also trying to teach us is to listen to your parents or else you will miss out on important things.") and compound-complex sentences ("If you use your money little by little you won't have to worry about buying things because your using your money little by little, and your still making money.") the uniformity of sentence lengths and the absence of short, simple sentences make the response somewhat difficult to read.

This short response contains several errors in the conventions of the English language, including missing commas before coordinating conjunctions ("... little or you ..." "parents or else ..."), usage errors ("your" for "you're"), and pronoun agreement errors ("... the author is also trying to teach us to listen to your parents ..."). These errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 2 Essay

Student Work Sample Three

What I learned from reading this Story was that Saving won't hurt you it can really helps you alot. In the Story the Oldest and the middle Oldest brothers sale there land. Then they move to Great City and found all of the luxuries they dream of. Meanwhile the youngest brother was getting more land his older brother came to come vist him. The first time they came on horses the next visted was on foot. They visted 2 times after that. There going to come a fifth time but they had no more money. So the youngest brother told them to come stay with him. They came and stay but the youngest brother hired them to work for them and little by little and piece by piece they were getting more money and more Inad.

Commentary

This response demonstrates a limited understanding of a response to literature and the writing task by presenting a judgment about the lesson readers should learn and providing limited facts and explanations to support this judgment.

The organizational structure of this one-paragraph response consists of a statement of the lesson the story illustrates (“... Saving won’t hurt you it can really helps you a lot.”) followed by a general retelling of the plot. The events the writer describes provide weak support for the lesson about saving money. The fact that the youngest brother was getting more land, for example, is not clearly tied to the idea of saving money, and the statement in the final sentence that the brothers were acquiring more money and more land only vaguely suggests that saving is important. Similarly, the writer implies only vaguely that the older brothers ran out of money because they spent it unwisely rather than saved it (“Then they move to Great City and found all of the luxuries they dream of. Meanwhile the youngest brother was getting more land his older brother came to come vist him. The first time they came on horses the next visted was on foot. They visted 2 times after that. There going to come a fifth time but they had no more money.”).

The response demonstrates little control at the sentence level. The writer uses rambling sentences consisting of independent clauses fused together without punctuation (“Meanwhile the youngest brother was getting more land his older brother came to come vist him.” “The first time they came on horses the next visted was on foot.”), compound sentences that are not correctly punctuated (“There going to come a fifth time but they had no more money.”), and simple sentences (“They visted 2 times after that.”).

The response contains numerous errors in the conventions of the English language, including errors in

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 2 Essay

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

Commentary

capitalization ("In the Story the Oldest and the middle Oldest brothers sale there land."), spelling ("alot," "sale" for "sell," "vist" for "visit"), usage ("there" for "their," "there" for "they're"), subject-verb agreement ("... it can really helps you ..."), verb tense ("They came and stay ..."), and placement of the preposition ("Then they move to Great City and found all of the luxuries they dream of.").

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 1 Essay

Student Work Sample One

Look ahead. Looking ahead is a good lesson. If you Look ahead it can help you in life. Also it can help you pretict. For exaple Say You were reading a story. It didn't have eny Picheres you can look ahead. The title it said volcano's so look ahead And say it's about volcanos.

Don't gust think about yourself. Becaus it is selfish and som times mean. For example You are Litering and his friend said you litering he said how he Kares. So that is a bad thing to do. And plus uther people have to pick it up.

Helping is a good thing in my school. You can get Lot's of things. Like blue tickets. Pink tiketes and aword's. For helping you can get notest. For example If you help in new orlean's You can Maby be on tv.

Lisnig is a good thing in school at home and at work. Say if you lisen and a nother person doesn't and he gets in truble. For if a nother person said you can win a million dollers. And You were lisning and ... buy with it, You can win he would not.

Saving mony. Saving mony is a habit that you should get into. Because when You grow up you can by di-monds. You can buy perl rings nekleses and a car, hous, clothes, and other stuff.

Commentary

This response demonstrates little understanding of the story and no understanding of the purpose of a response to literature, and it addresses only one part of the writing task. Rather than using details from the text to support a judgment about the lesson readers should learn, the writer lists lessons that might be inferred from the story but that are not supported with examples from the text.

The writer organizes the response into five paragraphs that are randomly ordered and do not focus on a central idea. Each paragraph presents a lesson the writer has inferred from the story, but the ineffective examples used to support each lesson appear to derive from speculation, and to a lesser extent from prior knowledge, rather than from the text. In the last paragraph, for example, saving money may be a lesson from the story, but nothing in the writer's discussion refers to the story.

The response contains minimal sentence variety. It consists of simple sentences ("Don't gust think about yourself." "Lisnig is a good thing in school at home and at work."), basic complex sentences ("If you look ahead it can help you in life."), sentence fragments ("Becaus it is selfish and som times mean." "Like blue tickets." "Say if you lisen and a nother person doesn't and he gets in truble."), and run-on sentences ("The title it said volcano's so look ahead And say it's about volcanos." "For example You are Litering and his friend said you litering he said how he Kares."). The response demonstrates very little control at the sentence level.

The response contains serious errors in the conventions of the English language, including errors in spelling ("pretict," "exaple," "eny," "Picheres," "gust"), errors in capitalization ("For exaple Say You were reading a story. It didn't have eny Picheres you can

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 1 Essay

Student Work Sample One (continued)

Commentary

look ahead.”), misuse of apostrophes (“You can get Lot’s of things.” “Pink tiketes and aword’s” “new orlean’s”), and many sentence-construction errors. These errors interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 1 Essay

Student Work Sample Two

The farmer has 3 sons. The kids get little by little to get more farm land to grow his crops. The kids go to town to get mony little by little to by farm land. Thay sold crops to get mony. The oldest son spint his mony then he was pore he had to live with hes other bruther. Thay had farm land for ther team then thay can see thay had farm land. The dad was very proud. Thay got a lot of farm land.

Commentary

This response demonstrates no understanding of a response to literature because it lacks a judgment about the story. The writer demonstrates a partial understanding of the story by retelling some events, but much of the retelling is inaccurate (“The kids go to town to get mony little by little to by farm land.” “The dad was very proud.”). The parts of the story that are retold vaguely suggest a lesson (“The oldest son spint his mony then he was pore . . .”).

The response consists of a single paragraph and lacks an organizational structure and central idea. The writer apparently intends the paragraph to read as a narrative, but the factual inaccuracies (“The kids go to town to get money . . .” “The dad was very proud.”) and random ordering of events disrupt any attempt at chronological sequencing.

The writer uses only simple sentences (“Thay sold crops to get mony.” “They got a lot of farm land.”) and run-on sentences (“Thay had farm land for ther team then thay can see thay had farm land.”).

The response contains serious errors in the conventions of the English language that interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing. These include errors in spelling (“mony,” thay,” “spint”), usage errors (“by” for “buy”), and mistaken shifts in verb tense (Thay had farm land for ther team then thay can see thay had farm land.”). Inappropriate placement of the modifying phrase “little by little” in the second and third sentences adds to the difficulty of understanding the paragraph.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on March 7 and 8, 2006

Score Point 1 Essay

Student Work Sample Three

This man had three sons and the help ther Dad on ther Land and untul his three sons grow be got older and died ther father left ther land to them and Oldes Bother and Middle Bother had ther piece. But Oldest Broter said if we live togetr we we can have lots of Land so middle Bother and younges Brothe sold the piec and oldes Brther had Left and he grow crops.

Commentary

This response demonstrates little understanding of the story and no understanding of the purpose of a response to literature. Although the writer retells some of the story in this short response, the response does not address all of the writing task. The writer presents no judgment about the lesson the story suggests, and the events the writer describes do not illustrate a lesson.

There is no evidence of an organizational structure in this response and no central idea. Although the writer attempts to describe events in chronological order, information is only partially accurate in the first sentence and inaccurate in the second sentence.

The response demonstrates no sentence variety. The two sentences in this response consist of strings of clauses connected by “and” (“This man had three sons and the help ther Dad on ther Land and untul his three sons grow be got older and died ther father left ther land to them and Oldes Bother and Middle Bother had ther piece.”).

The response contains serious errors in the conventions of the English language, including errors in spelling (“ther,” “untul” for “until,” “Oldes,” “Broter,” “piec”), errors in capitalization (“... we can have lots of Land...”), absence of commas to separate clauses, and errors at the sentence level that create the impression that the three sons died instead of the father. These errors greatly interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Grade Four Response to Literature Writing Task

Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

The writing task below was administered to students who took the CST in writing in grade four on May 2 or 3, 2006. Sample student responses and teacher commentaries are presented on pages 35 through 56.

Response to Literature Writing Task

Directions:

- Read the story on the following pages.
- As you read, you may mark the story or make notes. Marks and notes will not be scored.
- After reading the story, you will be given directions to write an essay. You will have time to read, plan your essay, and write a first draft with edits.
- You may reread or go back to the story at any time during the test.
- Only what you write on the lined pages in this booklet will be scored.
- Use only a No. 2 pencil to write your essay.

Scoring:

Your writing will be scored on how well you

- show your understanding of the story,
- give examples from the story, and
- use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Jack and Billy

by Hank Poff

During summer vacation when I was twelve, a sawmill was operating in the woods near our farm. Early each morning, I'd watch the men cut down big trees, saw them into logs, and skid the logs to the mill to be cut into lumber.

The logs were dragged by a team of Clydesdale horses named Jack and Billy. They were gentle, and I petted them every chance I got.

One day, Mr. Davis, the mill owner, said he'd pay me 15 cents a day to bring fresh water to his men. In 1942, that was a lot of money! I said, "Yes."

My bike had a wire basket over the front wheel, and I asked my mother for two glass cider jugs. They fit perfectly in the basket. I filled them with cold water

from the well and made several trips to the woods each day. The horses, Jack and Billy, drank water from a nearby stream.

One afternoon when Jack and Billy were pulling a log up to the mill, a stick became wedged in Jack's right front hoof. After Mr. Davis removed the stick, the horse driver said that the foot should be doctored. But Mr. Davis said he didn't have time for that. He said if the horse couldn't earn its keep, he'd get one that could.

I felt sick inside. Jack and Billy were my best friends! I couldn't stop thinking about Jack's foot and what Mr. Davis had said.

For the rest of the day the team pulled logs from the woods. By nightfall, Jack was limping badly. Mr. Davis told his crew that the mill would be closed for three days because he'd be away for the Fourth of July. He offered to pay me a dollar to feed and water the horses while he was gone. I quickly agreed.

The next morning, I rode my bike to Mr. Davis's barn. I fed the horses their grain and filled the mangers with fresh hay. When I tied a long rope to their halters and led them to the creek for water, I was sad to see that Jack was still limping.

After I cleaned the stalls and led the horses back, I wanted to look at Jack's hoof. I reached down and grabbed the hair on the back of his leg, as I'd seen Mr. Davis do, and Jack lifted up his foot so I could see.

The part inside of the big iron shoe looked red and mushy. When I put the hoof down, Jack let only the front of it rest lightly on the ground.

I knew that Jack couldn't work with that injured foot, but if he didn't earn his keep, Mr. Davis would get rid of him. I just couldn't let that happen. But what could I do? I didn't know anything about medicine, and Mr. Davis said he wouldn't pay for a doctor.

As I slowly rode my bike home, my mind raced. I needed to find a way to help my big friend.

At my house, I saw our neighbor, Mr. Sherman. He was in the kitchen drinking coffee. I told him all about Jack, and he said he'd take a look at the injured hoof. That made me very happy because Mr. Sherman raised horses and knew how to care for them.

When we got to the barn, Mr. Sherman told me to get a foot tub of warm water. He scrubbed Jack's hoof with a brush, then put it into the tub of water to soak. We found a large can of animal salve, which Mr. Sherman put on the wound. He said that Jack's foot would be well in a few days.

I had been trying to act like a grown-up, but in my excitement I gave Mr. Sherman a big hug that sent him sprawling backward between the horse's front legs.

Around noon, I went back and soaked Jack's hoof again and put on new salve. I did it again that evening. I soaked and treated Jack's wound three times a day for the next two days.

The morning that Mr. Davis returned, I woke up early and waited for the saw-mill motor to start. As soon as I heard it, I jumped on my bike and pedaled as fast as I could to the mill.

Just as I arrived, the team was dragging a big log from the woods. Jack pulled with all his might, and he wasn't limping!

When the team stopped, I dropped my bike and ran down to the horses. I wrapped my arms around Jack's head and hugged him while Billy laid his nose on my shoulder. At that moment, I was filled with happiness. I knew that my friend wouldn't have to be sent away.

"Jack and Billy" by Hank Poff from *Highlights*, July 2004, copyright © 2004 by Highlights Magazine for Children. Used by permission.

Response to Literature Writing the Essay

Based on the story "Jack and Billy," how can the reader tell that the narrator is a caring person? Use specific examples from the story to support your answer.

When you write your essay, remember

- to show your understanding of the story,
- to give examples from the story, and
- to use correct grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 4 Essay

Student Work Sample One

The Hurt Hoof

The narrator of "Jack and Billy" is a real caring person. In this essay, there are many reasons that show that he is caring.

The narrator is a great and caring person because when the sawmill was opened, he brought fresh water to the workers. He filled cider jars with water, and he put them in the basket on his bike. Then he took them to the workers. You can also tell that he is caring because he gets up bright and early so he can get to the mill right when it opens to keep bringing water and other things to the workers. He is also caring, because he is happy to do these things for them. These are just some of the reasons why he is caring.

The boy is also caring because when Mr. Davis offers him a dollar to care for the horses, he doesn't do it for the money, he does it to help Jack. The reason he does this is because when Jack got a stick jammed in his hoof, he nearly got sent away, and the boy cared more about the horse than money. He helped the horse by getting the next-door neighbor to help him. The narrator is so caring that he helped Jack get better instead of worrying about the Forth of July. These are some of many reasons why he is caring.

The last few ways of showing that the boy is caring is that he said that he felt sick inside when he thought something bad might happen to Jack. This was because he cared so much about Jack, his friend. Another reason is that when Jack got better, he threw his arms around him and hugged him. The last way I can tell the narrator cares is that he is filled with lots of joy when Jack pulled a big log from the woods. He would not do this if he did not care. These are all the reasons that show that the narrator is caring.

Commentary

This response demonstrates a clear understanding of the story and the purpose of a response to literature by using textual evidence to effectively support the judgment that the narrator is a caring person. All of the writing task is clearly addressed through the use of details and specific examples to illustrate the writer's judgments.

The writer maintains a consistent organizational structure and focus beginning in the first paragraph where the central idea is introduced ("In this essay, there are many reasons that show that he is caring."). This idea is supported in subsequent paragraphs with examples and details from the text. In the second paragraph, for example, the writer supports the central idea by describing the narrator's treatment of the sawmill workers ("... he brought fresh water to the workers." "... he gets up bright and early so he can get to the mill right when it opens to keep bringing water and other things to the workers." "... he is happy to do these things for them.").

In the third and fourth paragraphs, the writer cites several examples that demonstrate the boy's concern for the horse, Jack ("... when Jack got a stick jammed in his hoof, he nearly got sent away, and the boy cared more about the horse than money." "... he helped Jack get better instead of worrying about the Forth of July." "... he said that he felt sick inside when he thought something bad might happen to Jack." "... when Jack got better, he threw his arms around him and hugged him."). Sometimes, the writer includes explanations to clarify the significance of an example ("he is filled with lots of joy when Jack pulled a big log from the woods. He would not do this if he did not care.").

The response demonstrates sentence variety by combining simple sentences ("These are just some of

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 4 Essay

Student Work Sample One (continued)

I hope that this essay has helped you understand how the narrator is caring. I hope you like my ideas and that you will share them with everyone else.

Commentary

the reasons why he is caring.”), compound sentences (“He filled cider jars with water, and he put them in the basket on his bike.”), and complex sentences (“The narrator is a great and caring person because when the sawmill was opened, he brought fresh water to the workers.”).

This response contains few errors in the conventions of the English language. At the end of the second paragraph, the writer uses a comma incorrectly to separate an independent from a subordinate clause (“He is also caring, because he is happy to do these things for them.”), and the third paragraph contains two misspellings (“nextdoor” and “Forth”). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 4 Essay

Student Work Sample Two

Have you ever had a pet or stuffed animal that you cared for? If anything happened to it, you would try to help in any way you could, right? That's what happened to a boy when his best friend, a horse named Jack, got a stick wedged in his hoof. The owner would not pay for a doctor. The owner left town for the fourth of July, and he put the boy in charge of feeding and taking care of the horses.

I know that the narrator, the boy, cares for Jack because when your friend is hurt, you want to help them as much as possible. So, when Jack got the stick caught in his hoof and started to limp after the stick was pulled out, the boy wanted to help Jack as much as possible. This shows that he is a caring person.

The boys next door neighbor had horses and knew how to care for them. The boy asked his neighbor to come and help Jack. His neighbor says to soak his foot in warm water for a couple of days. This proves that the boy does care for Jack because he went for help when his best friend was in trouble. It also says that the boy petted the horses, whenever he could. That says that he saying to Jack that he is doing a great job and he is encouraging Jack. I know from my life that when someone says "good job!" or says something nice about someone, it means that they showed good effort and that they are trying to pick them up again. The last clue that the boy gives is that in the end he hugs Jack, showing that they have a bond that binds them together as great friends and nothing would break their friendship. The boy does this because he cares a lot.

When the owner of the horses comes back, he finds that his horse Jack is no longer limping, thanks to the caring boy that spent his time trying to take his best friend out of pain and misery.

Commentary

This response demonstrates a clear understanding of the story and the purpose of a response to literature. It addresses all of the writing task by linking prior knowledge with evidence from the text to support the judgment that the narrator is a caring person.

The writer opens the essay by using prior knowledge to lead into the discussion of the story ("Have you ever had a pet or stuffed animal that you cared for? If anything happened to it, you would try to help in any way you could, right?" "That's what happened to a boy when his best friend, a horse named Jack, got a stick wedged in his hoof.").

At the beginning of the second paragraph, the writer presents a clear central idea ("I know that the narrator, the boy, cares for Jack because when your friend is hurt, you want to help them as much as possible.") and focuses on this idea throughout the response. In the same paragraph, for example, the writer provides evidence that demonstrates that the narrator is caring ("... when Jack got the stick caught in his hoof and started to limp after the stick was pulled out, the boy wanted to help Jack as much as possible."). In the third paragraph, the writer observes that the narrator pets Jack and goes for help, and infers from prior experience that these actions demonstrate the narrator's concern ("I know from my life that when someone says "good job!" or says something nice about someone, it means that they... are trying to pick them up again.").

The writer concludes by summarizing the final event in the story and suggesting its significance ("When the owner of the horses comes back, he finds that his horse Jack is no longer limping, thanks to the caring boy that spent his time trying to take his best friend out of pain and misery").

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 4 Essay

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Commentary

The writer uses a variety of sentence types, including simple sentences ("The boy asked his neighbor to come and help Jack."), compound sentences ("The owner left town for the fourth of July, and he put the boy in charge of feeding and taking care of the horses."), and complex sentences ("I know that the narrator, the boy, cares for Jack because when your friend is hurt, you want to help them as much as possible."). In the preceding and in the following example, the writer adds clarity and sentence variety by incorporating nonrestrictive phrases (That's what happened to a boy when his best friend, a horse named Jack, got a stick wedged in his foot.).

This response contains few errors in the conventions of the English language. In the third paragraph, the writer fails to use an apostrophe to form a possessive noun ("boys" for "boy's") and unintentionally shifts from simple past to simple present tense ("The boy asked his neighbor to come and help Jack. His neighbor says to soak his foot in warm water for a couple of days."). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 4 Essay

Student Work Sample Three

There are many ways that the reader can tell that the narrator is a caring person. He really cared for the horses, Jack and Billy, at the sawmill, and when Jack got a stick caught in his foot, the narrator was there ready, and very willing to help. Mr. Davis (the mill owner) was not willing to pay for a doctor, and if Jack's foot didn't heal, Jack would be sent away for good. Jack was the narrator's friend, and he could definitely not let this happen. Already you can see that the narrator really cared a lot. After that, he luckily ran into his neighbor, Mr. Sherman, who just happened to be an expert on horses.

By then, the narrator was desperately trying to find a cure, so Mr. Sherman said he'd take a look at Jack's injured hoof. He got a mixture of all sorts of things together, including a tub of warm water, a scrub-brush, and a can of animal salve. Then, the narrator put Jack's foot in warm water, and applied animal salve three times a day. This shows he is very caring because he did this instead of doing the Fourth of July.

After two days of treatments, Jack was healed. The narrator was bursting with joy, and hugged Jack. You can very much tell that the narrator is a very caring person.

Commentary

This response demonstrates a clear understanding of the story and the purpose of a response to literature. It addresses all of the writing task by providing evidence from the text to support the judgment that the narrator is a caring person.

The response demonstrates a consistent focus and organizational structure. The writer states the central idea in the first paragraph ("There are many ways that the reader can tell that the narrator is a caring person.") and supports it with relevant details from the story ("... the narrator was desperately trying to find a cure..." "Jack was healed. The narrator was bursting with joy, and hugged Jack.") In one instance, the writer includes explanations to emphasize how much the narrator cares for Jack ("... the narrator put Jack's foot in warm water, and applied animal salve three times a day. This shows he is very caring because he did this instead of doing the Fourth of July."). The writer concludes by reiterating the central idea ("You can very much tell that the narrator is a very caring person.").

The response contains a variety of sentence types, including simple sentences ("You can very much tell that the narrator is a very caring person."), compound sentences ("Jack was the narrator's friend, and he could definitely not let this happen."), complex sentences ("After two days of treatments, Jack was healed."), and compound-complex sentences ("He really cared for the horses, Jack and Billy, at the sawmill, and when Jack got a stick caught in his foot, the narrator was there ready, and very willing to help."). In addition, the writer achieves sentence variety by including sentences of varying lengths, especially in the first paragraph.

The response demonstrates few errors in the conventions of the English language. In the first paragraph,

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 4 Essay

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

Commentary

the writer mistakenly uses parentheses instead of commas to set off an appositive ("Mr. Davis [the mill owner] was not willing to pay for a doctor . . ."). In the second paragraph, the writer omits the apostrophe in the possessive form of the noun ("Then, the narrator put Jacks foot in warm water . . ."). These errors are to be expected in a first draft and do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 3 Essay

Student Work Sample One

"Jack and Billy" by Hank Poff is a story about a young boy who has two very good friends named Jack and Billy. Jack and Billy are Clydesdale horses that drag logs to a mill to be cut into lumber. One day, a stick gets wedged into Jack's foot and Mr. Davis says that he didn't have time to go to the doctor nor did he want to pay for one. On the fourth of July, Mr. Davis goes on a vacation for three days and gives the twelve year old boy a job to feed and water the horses while he was gone.

The boy quickly agreed because Mr. Davis offered to pay him a dollar for his work. The boy couldn't stop thinking about Jack's hoof, so he decided to go talk to his friend about Jack's injury. His friend told him to soak Jack's foot three times a day for two days. When Mr. Davis arrived, Jack was all cured!

I think that the narrator who was the twelve year old boy was caring because he really cared about Jack and his injury. He wanted to cure him even though he wasn't going to be paid for curing Jack's hoof. The boy was very caring towards these animals. He watched out for the dangers that could harm Jack.

I think that Jack really likes the boy now since he cured him. The boy also petted them and kept them company. The boy is a very caring character.

Someday, if I get a chance to, I would love to work with horses and do stuff with them almost every day. I think that it would be fun to work with animals instead of just people.

The story Jack and Billy really taught me some things that are useful in life like kindness, responsibility, and work. Jack and Billy was a great story, and I thought that the narrator was very kind.

Commentary

This response addresses the writing task and demonstrates a general understanding of the story and the purpose of a response to literature by describing incidents from the story that indicate the narrator is caring.

After providing background on the characters in the first paragraph, the writer focuses in the second paragraph on parts of the story that illustrate the narrator's concern for the injured horse ("The boy couldn't stop thinking about Jack's hoof, so he decided to go talk to his friend about Jack's injury."). In the third paragraph, the writer states the central idea ("I think that the narrator who was the twelve year old boy was caring because he really cared about Jack and his injury.") and offers evidence that supports this idea ("[The boy] wanted to cure [Jack] even though he wasn't going to be paid for curing Jack's hoof."). The writer adds more support in the fourth paragraph ("The boy also petted them and kept them company.").

Although some evidence the writer cites is buried in repetitive generalizations ("... the narrator ... was caring because he really cared about Jack and his injury.") and although the writer sometimes loses focus ("Someday, if I get a chance to, I would love to work with horses..."), the supporting details and explanations are mostly relevant and the organization is mostly consistent.

The response contains a variety of sentence types, including simple sentences ("The boy was very caring towards these animals."), compound sentences ("The boy couldn't stop thinking about Jack's hoof, so he decided to go talk to his friend about Jack's injury."), and complex sentences ("When Mr. Davis arrived, Jack was all cured!").

This response contains some errors in the conven-

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 3 Essay

Student Work Sample One (continued)

Commentary

tions of the English language, including a misspelling and a capitalization error in the first paragraph (“nore” for “nor”) and (“forth of July”), missing hyphens in the first and third paragraphs (“twelve year old boy”), and missing quotation marks around the title of the story in the last paragraph. These errors do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 3 Essay

Student Work Sample Two

There are many things in the story Jack and Billy that show how kind the narrator was. You can clearly see he cares when he says "I felt sick inside" when Jack, the horse, might have to leave forever. Also, you see another example of his kindness because he nursed his horse friend back to health. When he learned his friend would be alright, he probably felt like the happiest kid on earth! That must have shown his deep love for the animal. Also it sounds like he was quite gentle with Jack and Billy, making sure not to hurt them. You can tell he really wants to see if his friends are alright when he says "... as soon as I heard the sawmill start I jumped on my bike and pedaled to the mill as fast as I could." These are clear reasons that show how deeply and why he cares.

Commentary

This response addresses the writing task and demonstrates an understanding of the story and the purpose of a response to literature by citing events from the text that support the judgment that the narrator is a caring person.

Although this response consists of only one paragraph, the writer maintains a mostly consistent focus and organizational structure. The response begins with a broadly stated central idea that is supported with mostly relevant details ("There are many things in the story Jack and Billy that show how kind the narrator was." "... [the narrator] 'felt sick inside' when Jack, the horse, might have to leave forever... he nursed his horse friend back to health."). In the middle of the response, the writer drifts into speculation and unsupported assertions ("When he learned his friend would be alright, he probably felt like the happiest kid on earth! That must have shown his deep love for the animal."). The writer then adds another detail, however, that effectively supports the central idea ("You can tell he really wants to see if his friends are alright when he says '... as soon as I heard the sawmill start I jumped on my bike and pedaled to the mill as fast as I could.'").

The response demonstrates some sentence variety, mainly by mixing simple sentences ("That must have shown his deep love for the animal.") and complex sentences ("When he learned his friend would be alright, he probably felt like the happiest kid on earth!").

This response contains some errors in the conventions of the English language. In the first sentence, the writer underlines the name of the story instead of using quotation marks ("... in the story Jack and Billy..."). Other errors include failure to use commas when introducing dialogue ("... when he says 'I felt sick inside' when Jack, the horse, might have to leave

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 3 Essay

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Commentary

forever.” “... when he says “... as soon as I heard ...”) and use of the nonstandard form of all right (“al-right”). These errors do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 3 Essay

Student Work Sample Three

In the story "Jack and Billy" the narrator is very caring. She is not selfish at all, and she loves to see her best friends. I think the reader can tell that the narrator is very caring because she takes the time to do stuff for people and stuff for animals too.

One example that shows the narrator is very caring is she helps animals when they have engeries. Like when Jack got a stick stuck in his hoof. The narrator stayed with him until his hoof was all better and he was ready to go. I think that is one way the reader can tell the narrator is very caring.

Another example is when someone was in trouble the narrator would go get someone to help. When Jack needed someone to fix up his hoof, the narrator got Mr. Sherman to help out.

My last example is the narrator makes sure people are taken care of. When Mr. Davis payed the narrator 15 cents, a lot of money back then, the narrator brings his workers fresh cold water every day.

When I read the story, I thought the narrator was very caring because she does stuff that is very caring, and that is why I think the readers think the narrator is very caring.

Commentary

This response addresses the writing task and demonstrates an understanding of the story and the purpose of a response to literature by using some textual references to support the judgment that the narrator is a caring person.

The response demonstrates a mostly consistent focus and organizational structure, including appropriate paragraphing to organize ideas. The writer begins by stating the central idea in the first paragraph ("... the narrator is very caring because she takes the time to do stuff for people and stuff for animals too."). In the next three paragraphs, the writer cites evidence that, although stated in general terms, nevertheless supports the central idea. In the second paragraph, for example, the writer cites an incident that illustrates that the narrator is a caring person ("Like when Jack got a stick stuck in his hoof. The narrator stayed with him until his hoof was all better and he was ready to go.").

In the third paragraph, the writer cites more evidence that the narrator is caring ("... when someone was in trouble the narrator would go get someone to help ... the narrator got Mr. Sherman to help out.") and in paragraph four cites somewhat weaker evidence ("When Mr. Davis payed the narrator 15 cents ... the narrator brings his worker fresh cold water every day."). The writer strays into irrelevance briefly by noting that fifteen cents was "a lot of money back then."

The response demonstrates some sentence variety, including simple sentences ("I think that is one way the reader can tell the narrator is very caring."), compound sentences ("She is not selfish at all, and she loves to see her best friends."), and compound-complex sentences ("When I read the story, I thought the narrator was very caring because she does stuff that is very caring, and that is why I think the readers think the narrator is very caring.").

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 3 Essay

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

Commentary

The response contains some errors in the conventions of the English language, including spelling errors (“engeries” for “injuries” and “payed” for “paid”), a lack of commas after introductory words (“In the story ‘Jack and Billy’ the narrator is very caring.” “... when someone was in trouble the narrator would go...”), and a sentence fragment (“Like when Jack got a stick stuck in his hoof.”).

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 2 Essay

Student Work Sample One

The boy in the story was very kind to Jack (horse). His feeling for jack were very careful when Jack hurt his hoof first the boy didn't know what to do so then he went to Mr. Sherman. He had horses before and he know how to take care of them. The boy was getting worrid about Jack so he took care of Jack for three times a day. When the boy heared the sawmill motor start he jumped out of bed and got on his bike.

The boy ran to Jack and Billy when they stop. The boy hugged Jack and Billy.

I think the boy did a very good job taking care of Jack. He was a very nice person.

Commentary

This response addresses the writing task but demonstrates a limited understanding of the story and little understanding of the purpose of a response to literature. It cites events from the story but only suggests rather than presents a central idea and lacks explanations to illustrate how the events cited support a central idea.

In the first paragraph, the writer suggests a central idea that marginally relates to the notion that the narrator is caring ("The boy in the story was very kind to Jack [horse]."). The writer focuses on the idea that the narrator treats Jack well and tries to support it with references to the story. Some events the writer cites indicate that the narrator is caring without need for further explanation ("... [the narrator] took care of Jack for three times a day." "The boy hugged Jack and Billy."). Other references, however, maybe intended to illustrate that the boy is a caring person, but they do not clearly do so without further explanation ("... when Jack hurt his hoof first the boy didn't know what to do so then he went to Mr. Sherman." "When the boy heard the sawmill motor start he jumped out of bed and got on his bike."). These shifts between references that support a central idea and those that do not produce an inconsistent organizational structure.

The writer uses varied sentence types, including simple sentences ("He was a very nice person."), compound sentences ("He had horses before and he know how to take care of them."), and complex sentences ("When the boy heared the sawmill motor start he jumped out of bed and got on his bike.").

The response includes several errors in the conventions of the English language, including spelling errors ("worrid" for "worried" and "heared" for "heard"), run-on sentences ("His feeling for jack were very

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 2 Essay

Student Work Sample One (continued)

Commentary

careful when Jack hurt his hoof first the boy didn't know what to do so then he went to Mr. Sherman."), a lack of commas before a coordinating conjunction and after an introductory group of words ("He had horses before and he know how to take care of them." "When the boy heard the sawmill motor start he jumped out of bed and got on his bike."), and an unintentional shift in verb tenses ("The boy ran to Jack and Billy when they stop."). These errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 2 Essay

Student Work Sample Two

The twelve year old boy is a careing person beacase he was careing of the horse Jack. I understood that this story is part sad and part happy. I thought the story was good because the story was based on a true story and I like storys that are with horses. The story was about the horse Jack. Jack had a bad foot. So the boy was worried because Mr. David said that if Jack couldn't work he'll get rid of him. Then he thought of an idea. That afternoon he went to Mr. Sherman his neighbor because he knew how to take care of horses. Mr. Sherman told the boy to bring a foot tub with hot water. He found horse salve. So they put it in Jacks foot. Mr. Sherman told him in a few days Jack would be fine. Before Mr. David left he told the workmen that the mill would be shut down for three days because Mr. David was going for the 4th of July. So he told the boy to feed and give them water for one doller. After the three days past Jack wasn't limping no more. The boy was happy for Mr. David not getting rid of Jack.

Commentary

This response begins to address the writing task in the first sentence where the writer suggests a central idea ("The twelve year old boy is a careing person beacase he was careing of the horse Jack."). The writer attempts to support this idea with details from the text, but the details read like an incomplete plot summary rather than evidence to support the central idea. Overall, this response demonstrates a limited understanding of the story and little understanding of the purpose of a response to literature.

The response demonstrates an inconsistent focus and organizational structure. After a statement of the central idea in the first sentence, for example, the writer abruptly inserts opinions about the story ("I understood that this story is part sad and part happy. I thought the story was good because the story was based on a true story and I like storys that are with horses.").

After the third sentence, the writer shifts to a brief retelling of events that lead to the healing of Jack's hoof. For the most part, however, the retelling does not help illustrate that the narrator is a caring person ("Mr. Sherman told him in a few days Jack would be fine. Before Mr. David left he told the workmen that the mill would be shut doen for three days..." "So [Mr. David] told the boy to feed and give them water for one doller."). The rest of the retelling only weakly implies that the narrator is caring ("So the boy was worried because Mr. David said that if Jack couldn't work he'll get rid of him. Then he thought of an idea. That afternoon he went to Mr. Sherman his neighbor because he knew how to take care of horses." "So they put [the horse salve] in jacks foot." "The boy was happy for Mr. David not getting rid of Jack.").

The response combines simple sentences ("The story was about the horse Jack." "Jack had a bad foot.")

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 2 Essay

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Commentary

and awkwardly constructed complex and compound-complex sentences in which clauses are linked with "because" ("So the boy was worried because Mr. David said that if Jack couldn't work he'll get rid of him." "I thought the story was good because the story was based on a true story and I like storys that are with horses.").

The response contains several errors in the conventions of the English language, including misspellings ("careing," "beacase," "storys," and "doller"), a missing comma before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence ("... the story was based on a true story and I like storys that are with horses."), missing commas after introductory words in a complex sentence ("... if Jack couldn't work he'll get rid of him), a missing apostrophe in the possessive form of a noun ("Jacks"), a usage error ("past" for "passed"), a double negative ("... Jack wasn't limping no more."), and a run-on sentence ("I thought the story was good because the story was based on a true story and I like storys that are with horses."). These errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 2 Essay

Student Work Sample Three

I think that the narrator is a very, very, caring person because he said that he soaked Jacks hoof every day. You can also tell hes a very kind person because he was worried about him, he was worried about him. Even more than Jack's owner Mr. Davis. Even though the narrator talked more about Jack than Billy hes still is a very caring person to both horses. So all that I am saying is that the narrator is very, very, very, caring.

Commentary

This short response demonstrates a limited understanding of the story and little understanding of the purpose of a response to literature. Although the writer addresses some of the writing task by stating a central idea and attempting to support it with evidence from the story, the evidence cited is limited, and support for the writer's judgments is weak.

The writer begins to develop an inconsistent organizational structure in the first sentence where the response states a broad central idea but appears to support it with only one, very specific, piece of evidence. ("I think that the narrator is a very, very, caring person because he said that he soaked Jacks foot every day."). In the next three sentences, the writer presents evidence that is stated very generally ("... he was worried about him [Jack]. Even more than Jack's owner Mr. Davis. Even though the narrator talked more about Jack than Billy hes still a very caring person to both horses."). The progression from very specific evidence to several pieces of general evidence reflects a lack of organizational control.

The evidence that the writer cites varies in effectiveness. The response does note that the narrator soaks Jack's foot every day, clearly suggesting the narrator is caring. The broad claim that the narrator worries, however, would be strengthened if the writer were to cite some of the narrator's statements ("I felt sick inside." "I couldn't stop thinking about Jack's foot."). The claims that the narrator cared about Billy as much as Jack and that he cared more than Mr. Davis also require support from the text.

This short response consists mostly of complex sentences ("I think that the narrator is a very, very, caring person because he said that he soaked Jacks hoof every day." "Even though the narrator talked more

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 2 Essay

Student Work Sample Three (continued)

Commentary

about Jack than Billy hes still is a very carring person to both horses.”).

The response contains several errors in the conventions of the English language, including missing apostrophes (“Jacks” for “Jack’s” and “hes” for “he’s”), misspellings (“carring”), missing commas after introductory words in complex sentences (“Even though the narrator talked more about Jack than Billy hes still is a very carring person . . .”), and a sentence fragment (“Even more than Jack’s owner Mr. Davis.”). These errors are not likely to interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 1 Essay

Student Work Sample One

Becuse someone helped billy with his hoof or else billy would have had to leve and every day the boy would help the guys so he got fifteen cents every day and back then that was alote and then one day it was the fouth of july and then the man had to go to the fourth of july and sad he would pay the boy one dollar and he sad yes I will take care of jack and billy four one dollar a day.

Commentary

This response addresses only part of the writing task by retelling part of the story but neglecting to explain how the events the writer recounts illustrate that the narrator is a caring person.

The response suggests no central idea and recounts a limited portion of the story in random order. The writer's account begins with the horse receiving help for his injuries, backtracks to the narrator receiving fifteen cents to bring water to the mill workers, and ends with Mr. Davis leaving for the Fourth of July. The response contains inaccuracies ("... someone helped billy..." and "... billy would have had to leve...") and extraneous information ("... fifteen cents every day ... was alote..."). Weakened by inaccuracies and extraneous information and lacking a central idea as well as supporting facts, details, or explanations, the response demonstrates no understanding of the purpose of a response to literature.

The response demonstrates no sentence variety. It consists of a single run-on sentence.

The response contains serious errors in the conventions of the English language, including multiple spelling errors ("becuse," "leve," "alote" for "a lot," "fouth," and "sad" for "said"), capitalization errors ("billy" and "fouth of july"), a lack of quotation marks around dialogue ("... and he sad yes I will take care of jack and billy four one dollar a day."), and basic sentence construction errors. These errors seriously interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 1 Essay

Student Work Sample Two

*How can I tell that the narrator is a caring person?
I can tell because the narrator way tiring to be a good
friend to the others like Mr. Sheman.*

*He was very pleased that Mr. Sherman had horses.
Mr. Sherman raised horses and knows how to take care
of them. His friends were the horses Jack and Billy. Jack's
hoof was injured. He always came to see the horses after
the team was finished.*

*Just as he arrived the team was drgging a big log into
the woods. Jack pulled with all his might and Jack still
wasn't limping. He gave Jack a hug and Billy put his nose
on his shoulder.*

*One day Mr. Davis the mill owner, said, "He'd pay me
15 cents a day" in 1942, that was a lot of money. He said,
"Yes" to working for them.*

*Jack and Billy are his best friends, he couldn't stop
thinking about Jacks foot and what Mr. Davis said, about
him working there because he felt sick. At the moment
he was filled with happiness, and knew that my friend
wouldn't have to be sent away because of his hoof.*

Commentary

This response demonstrates little understanding of the story and no understanding of the purpose of a response to literature. The writer may intend the first two sentences of paragraph one to provide a focus for the response, but the second sentence is too vague and confusing to serve as a central idea ("How can I tell that the narrator is a caring person? I can tell because..." "... the narrator way tiring to be a good friend to the others like Mr. Sheman.").

Paragraphs two through five present events from the story in random order. The writer may intend these events to illustrate that the narrator is caring or a "good friend," but without a central idea or explanation that might link these events to a central idea, the presentation of events appears disorganized.

The lack of focus at the essay level is mirrored at the paragraph level. In paragraph two, the writer begins with a statement about the narrator ("[The narrator] was very pleased that Mr. Sherman had horses.") and about Mr. Sherman ("Mr. Sherman raised horses and knows how to take care of them."). The writer then makes statements using "his" and "he" that seem to refer back to Mr. Sherman in sentence two but probably refer to the narrator ("His friends were the horses Jack and Billy. Jack's hoof was injured. He always came to see the horses after the team was finished.").

The response demonstrates some sentence variety. It consists mostly of simple sentences ("He was very pleased that Mr. Sherman had horses." "Jack's hoof was injured.") with occasional compound sentences ("Jack pulled with all his might and Jack still wasn't limping." "He gave Jack a hug and Billy put his nose on his shoulder.") and complex sentences ("Just as he arrived the team was drgging a big log into the woods.").

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 1 Essay

Student Work Sample Two (continued)

Commentary

The response contains serious errors in the conventions of the English language, including spelling errors (“tiring” for “trying,” and “drgging”), missing commas before a coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence (“Jack pulled with all his might and Jack still wasn’t limping.” “He gave Jack a hug and Billy put his nose on his shoulder.”), missing commas to separate an appositive from the rest of the sentence (“One day Mr. Davis the mill owner, said, ...”), a misplaced comma before “and” (“At the moment he was filled with happiness, and knew that my friend ...”), and a run-on sentence (“One day Mr. Davis the mill owner, said, ‘He’d pay me 15 cents a day’ in 1942, that was a lot of money.”). The response also contains an inappropriate shift in verb tense (“Mr. Sherman raised horses and knows how to take care of them.”). These errors may interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Work and Teacher Commentaries for Grade Four Response to Literature Task Administered on May 2 and 3, 2006

Score Point 1 Essay

Student Work Sample Three

I could tell that he is a caring person becuas it seemed like he loved animals. I liked tha story a lot. That was a sad sotry but I wondered who the kid was. Another reson I liked the story is how he nurchered the horse Jack.

Commentary

This short paragraph addresses part of the writing task by stating that the narrator is a caring person. The writer fails, however, to support this idea with relevant details and events from the story. The lack of textual support demonstrates that the writer has little understanding of the story and no understanding of the purpose of a response to literature.

The response lacks a clear focus and organizational structure. The writer suggests a central idea in the first sentence ("I could tell that he is a caring person becuas it seemed like he loved animals."). Instead of supporting this idea with textual evidence, however, the writer drifts into a statement of opinion ("I liked tha story a lot. That was a sad sotry . . ."), a fleeting thought ("... I wondered who the kid was."), and another statement of opinion ("Another reson I liked the story is how he nurchered the horse Jack."). The observations that the narrator seemed to love animals and "nurchered" Jack could be used to support the writer's central idea, but the writer makes no attempt to use these observations for that purpose.

This short response is limited to four sentences, including two simple sentences ("I liked tha story a lot." "Another reson I liked the story is how he nurchered the horse Jack."), a compound sentence ("That was a sad sotry but I wondered who the kid was."), and a complex sentence ("I could tell that he is a caring person becuas it seemed like he loved animals.").

The writer makes serious errors in the conventions of the English language in each sentence of the response. These include spelling errors ("becuas," "tha" for "that," "sotry" for "story," "reson," and "nurchered") and a missing comma before the coordinating conjunction in the compound sentence ("That was a sad sotry but I wondered who the kid was."). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

2006 Grade Four Scoring Rubric*

The scoring rubric shown below is used to assign scores to students' written responses on the grade four writing tests. This rubric includes two sets of criteria. The criteria under "The writing" are adapted from the state English-language arts content standards for Writing Strategies and Written Conventions of English. These criteria are used to evaluate written responses in all genres tested for their clarity of purpose, central idea, and organization and for their use of supporting evidence, sentence variety, and writing conventions. The criteria under "Narrative writing," "Summary writing," and "Response to Literature writing," adapted from the grade four Writing Applications content standards for these genres, are used to evaluate student writing in the specific genres to which they apply.

On pages 59 through 64, the grade four rubric is presented in a rearranged format to indicate how all the scoring criteria are applied to student responses in each genre tested.

4

The writing—

- Clearly addresses all of the writing task.
- Demonstrates a *clear* understanding of purpose.
- Maintains a *consistent* point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate.
- Includes a *clearly presented* central idea with *relevant* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- Includes sentence variety.
- Contains *few, if any, errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do **not** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Narrative writing—

- Provides a *thoroughly developed* sequence of *significant* events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- Includes *vivid* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences.

Summary writing—

- Summarizes text with clear identification of the main idea(s) and the most significant details, in student's own words.

Response to literature writing—

- Demonstrates a *clear* understanding of the literary work.
- Provides *effective* support for judgments through *specific* references to text and/or prior knowledge.

3

The writing—

- Addresses most of the writing task.
- Demonstrates a *general* understanding of purpose.
- Maintains a *mostly consistent* point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate.
- Presents a central idea with *mostly* relevant facts, details, and/or explanations.
- Includes some sentence variety.
- Contains *some errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do **not** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Narrative writing—

- Provides an *adequately developed* sequence of significant events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- Includes *some* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences.

Summary writing—

- Summarizes text with the main idea(s) and important details, generally in the student's own words.

Response to literature writing—

- Demonstrates an understanding of the literary work.
- Provides *some* support for judgments through references to text and/or prior knowledge.

* The English-Language Arts Assessment Review Panel reviewed the scoring rubric for grade four and made slight adjustments to ensure that it was making accurate distinctions among score points. This rubric was used to score the 2006 CST in writing.

2 The writing—

- Addresses *some* of the writing task.
- Demonstrates *little* understanding of purpose.
- Maintains an *inconsistent* point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may lack appropriate paragraphing.
- Suggests a central idea with *limited* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- Includes *little* sentence variety.
- Contains *several errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors **may** interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Narrative writing—

- Provides a *minimally developed* sequence of events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- Includes *limited* descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences.

Summary writing—

- Summarizes text with some of the main idea(s) and details, minimal use of the student's own words.

Response to literature writing—

- Demonstrates a *limited* understanding of the literary work.
- Provides *weak* support for judgments.

1 The writing—

- Addresses *only one part* of the writing task.
- Demonstrates *no* understanding of purpose.
- Lacks a clear point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may contain inappropriate paragraphing.
- Lacks a central idea but may contain *marginally related* facts, details, and/or explanations.
- Includes *no* sentence variety.
- Contains *serious errors* in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

Narrative writing—

- Lacks a sequence of events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories.
- Lacks descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences.

Summary writing—

- Summarizes text with few, if any, main idea(s) and/or details, little or no use of the student's own words.

Response to literature writing—

- Demonstrates little or no understanding of the literary work.
- Fails to provide support for judgments.

Grade Four Scoring Rubric in Rearranged Format

In the following charts, the grade four scoring rubric is presented in a rearranged format to indicate how all the scoring criteria in the rubric—those derived from the state content standards for Writing Strategies and Written Conventions as well as those derived from the state content standards for Writing Applications—are applied to student responses in each genre tested.

The column under “Genre” contains the scoring criteria derived from the grade four content standards for Writing Applications. The column under “Organization and Focus” contains scoring criteria derived from the subset of Organization and Focus standards within the grade four content standards for Writing Strategies. The column under “Sentence Structure” contains the scoring criterion derived from the subset of Sentence Structure standards within the grade four content standards for Written and Oral English Language Conventions. The column under “Conventions” contains the scoring criteria derived from the subsets of Grammar, Punctuation, Capitalization, and Spelling standards within the grade four content standards for Written and Oral English Language Conventions. Although some columns contain more bullets than others, this is not meant to imply that columns with more bullets are more important in the scoring than the other columns. References to the writing content standards from which each scoring criterion is derived are presented in coded form following each criterion for score point four.

2006 Grade Four Scoring Rubric: Narrative Writing

Genre (Narrative Writing)	Organization and Focus	Sentence Structure	Conventions
4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provides a <i>thoroughly developed</i> sequence of significant events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories. (WA 2.1 a, d) ■ Includes <i>vivid</i> descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences. (WA 2.1 b, c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Clearly addresses all of the writing task.* ■ Demonstrates a <i>clear</i> understanding of purpose. (WS 1.1) ■ Maintains a <i>consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate. (WS 1.1; 1.2 a, c, e; 1.3) ■ Includes a <i>clearly presented</i> central idea with <i>relevant</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. (WS 1.2 b, c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes sentence <i>variety</i>. (WC 1.1; 1.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>few, if any, errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing. (WC 1.3–1.7)
3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provides an <i>adequately developed</i> sequence of significant events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories. ■ Includes <i>some</i> descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses most of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates a <i>general</i> understanding of purpose. ■ Maintains a <i>mostly consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate. ■ Presents a central idea with <i>mostly</i> relevant facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes some sentence <i>variety</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>some errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do not interfere with the reader’s understanding of the writing.

* Since this criterion addresses requirements of the writing test rather than a content standard, it does not include a standards reference.

	Genre (Narrative Writing)	Organization and Focus	Sentence Structure	Conventions
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Provides a <i>minimally developed</i> sequence of events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories. ■ Includes <i>limited</i> descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses <i>some</i> of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates <i>little</i> understanding of purpose. ■ Maintains an <i>inconsistent</i> point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may lack appropriate paragraphing. ■ <i>Suggests</i> a central idea with <i>limited</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes <i>little</i> sentence variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>several errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Lacks</i> a sequence of events to relate ideas, observations, and/or memories. ■ <i>Lacks</i> descriptive language and sensory details that enable the reader to imagine the events or experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses <i>only one part</i> of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates <i>no</i> understanding of purpose. ■ <i>Lacks</i> a clear point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may contain inappropriate paragraphing . ■ <i>Lacks</i> a central idea but may contain <i>marginally related</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes <i>no</i> sentence variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>serious errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

2006 Grade Four Scoring Rubric: Summary Writing

	Genre (Summary Writing)	Organization and Focus	Sentence Structure	Conventions
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarizes text with clear identification of the main idea(s) and the most <i>significant</i> details in student's own words. (WA 2.4) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly addresses all of the writing task.* Demonstrates a <i>clear</i> understanding of purpose. (WS 1.1) Maintains a <i>consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate. (WS 1.1, 1.2 a, c, e; 1.3) Includes a <i>clearly presented</i> central idea with <i>relevant</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. (WS 1.2 b, c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes sentence <i>variety</i>. (WC 1.1; 1.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contains <i>few, if any, errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing. (WC 1.3–1.7)
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarizes text with the main idea(s) and <i>important</i> details, generally in the student's own words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses most of the writing task. Demonstrates a <i>general</i> understanding of purpose. Maintains a <i>mostly consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate. Presents a central idea with <i>mostly</i> relevant facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes some sentence <i>variety</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contains <i>some errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Summarizes text with some of the main idea(s) and details, minimal use of the student's own words. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses <i>some</i> of the writing task. Demonstrates <i>little</i> understanding of purpose. Maintains an <i>inconsistent</i> point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may lack appropriate paragraphing. <i>Suggests</i> a central idea with <i>limited</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Includes <i>little</i> sentence variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Contains <i>several errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

* Since this criterion addresses requirements of the writing test rather than a content standard, it does not include a standards reference.

WA: Writing Applications standards

WS: Writing Strategies standards

WC: Written Conventions standards

Genre (Summary Writing)	Organization and Focus	Sentence Structure	Conventions
<div data-bbox="136 247 175 306">1</div> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Summarizes text with few, if any, main idea(s) and/or details, little or no use of the student's own words.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Addresses <i>only one part</i> of the writing task.■ Demonstrates <i>no</i> understanding of purpose.■ <i>Lacks</i> a clear point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may contain inappropriate paragraphing.■ <i>Lacks</i> a central idea but may contain <i>marginally related</i> facts, details, and/or explanations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Includes <i>no</i> sentence variety.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Contains <i>serious errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

2006 Grade Four Scoring Rubric: Response to Literature Writing

	Genre (Response to Literature Writing)	Organization and Focus	Sentence Structure	Conventions
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrates a <i>clear</i> understanding of the literary work. (WA 2.2 a) ■ Provides <i>effective</i> support for judgments through <i>specific</i> references to text and/or prior knowledge. (WA 2.2 b) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ <i>Clearly</i> addresses all of the writing task.* ■ Demonstrates a <i>clear</i> understanding of purpose. (WS 1.1) ■ Maintains a <i>consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate. (WS 1.1; 1.2 a, c, e; 1.3) ■ Includes a <i>clearly presented</i> central idea with <i>relevant</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. (WS 1.2 b, c) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes sentence <i>variety</i>. (WC 1.1; 1.2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>few, if any, errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing. (WC 1.3–1.7)
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrates an understanding of the literary work. ■ Provides <i>some</i> support for judgments through references to text and/or prior knowledge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses most of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates a <i>general</i> understanding of purpose. ■ Maintains a <i>mostly consistent</i> point of view, focus, and organizational structure, including paragraphing when appropriate. ■ Presents a central idea with <i>mostly</i> relevant facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes some sentence <i>variety</i>. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>some errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrates a <i>limited</i> understanding of the literary work. ■ Provides <i>weak</i> support for judgments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses <i>some</i> of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates <i>little</i> understanding of purpose. ■ Maintains an <i>inconsistent</i> point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may lack appropriate paragraphing. ■ <i>Suggests</i> a central idea with <i>limited</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes <i>little</i> sentence variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>several errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors may interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.

* Since this criterion addresses requirements of the writing test rather than a content standard, it does not include a standards reference.

1	Genre (Response to Literature Writing)	Organization and Focus	Sentence Structure	Conventions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Demonstrates little or no understanding of the literary work. ■ <i>Fails</i> to provide support for judgments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Addresses <i>only one part</i> of the writing task. ■ Demonstrates <i>no</i> understanding of purpose. ■ <i>Lacks</i> a clear point of view, focus, and/or organizational structure; may contain inappropriate paragraphing. ■ <i>Lacks</i> a central idea but may contain <i>marginally related</i> facts, details, and/or explanations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Includes <i>no</i> sentence variety. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contains <i>serious errors</i> in the conventions of the English language (grammar, punctuation, capitalization, spelling). These errors interfere with the reader's understanding of the writing.